

EU Warns of Lawsuit against Bulgaria

04 June 2008 Sofia _ The European Commission has warned it will sue Bulgaria if the emergency phone number 112 did function across the whole of the country by the end of June.

"Bulgaria is the only EU member state where the universal emergency number does not function according to the requirements", Vivian Reding, the European Union's Telecommunications Commissioner said.

She pointed that the current arrangement in which 112 covers only the region around Sofia was a violation of Bulgaria's obligations.

The EU Commissioner recalled that the Commission had already initiated a punitive procedure against Bulgaria, which has received a second and final letter of warning over its failure to ensure the functioning of the emergency number.

According to Reding, referring Bulgaria to the European Court of Justice might be the only way to make Sofia obey EU regulations over the matter.

All European Union states except Bulgaria have fully introduced the pan-EU 112 emergency phone number.

Since 1991 EU states have to make the call-free 112 number available across all their territory, the aim being that when any of the bloc's 490 million citizens need emergency help, they know what number to call even outside their home state.

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